

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., today said, "It was reported in a local newspaper that Mayor 'Daley said he wanted Congress to pass a national minimum wage that would not allow states to establish different hourly wage levels, as some - including Illinois - already do. He argued that such a national minimum wage would reduce the competition among the states to attract businesses.'

"I am shocked that Mayor Richard M. Daley, a Democratic Mayor of a city and state of hardworking Democrats - after siding with Corporate Republicans on 'Big-Box' - would again side with Corporate America's position on raising the national minimum wage. Mayor Daley's idea would also continue the 'rush to the bottom' that he started with his recent opposition to raising the minimum wage in Chicago.

"In response to my linking him to President Bush and a Republican Congress over his 'Big-Box' veto of a Chicago City Council ordinance, he said he was available to lobby Congress for a higher minimum wage. But then he came to Washington Wednesday and announced he wanted the minimum wage raised **as a ceiling** to benefit the corporations **rather than as a floor** to benefit the workers. National legislation is usually passed to establish

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"If Mayor Daley's 'maximum minimum wage' proposal were in effect today, Illinois workers making the minimum wage would be making \$5.15/hour instead of \$6.50/hour because Illinois chose to raise the minimum wage. States and local communities should maintain their ability to increase their own minimum wage. That's important because the Republican-controlled Congress and White House have refused to address the issue for over eight years. As a result, the purchasing power of today's minimum wage is the lowest it's been in 51 years, and it paves the way for irresponsible corporations to continue to create poverty level jobs. Under Mayor Daley's proposal, a congressionally passed minimum wage would have to compromise with the lowest common denominator," Jackson concluded.